

Ezek. 12:1 The word of the LORD also came unto me, saying,
Ezek. 12:2 Son of man, thou dwellest in the midst of a rebellious house, which have eyes to see, and see not; they have ears to hear, and hear not: for they *are* a rebellious house.

This chapter seems to introduce a new message from YHWH for Ezekiel to share with the captives. God first emphasizes to Ezekiel that the Jewish people in exile were part of a rebellious house, a disobedient family (from the Hebrew). Like all humans they have eyes for seeing and ears for hearing, but they neither see nor hear with understanding and discernment. Why? Because they have rejected God in disobedience. This is obviously a reference to spiritual sight and hearing. It would seem that there had been little, if any, positive response to his message up to this point.

Constable uses a good quote from Cooper: “Sin blinds the heart and mind. Like Samson, who could not see that his chosen path was leading to the loss of his ministry, the sinner does not see the ultimate consequences of sin that produces death and destruction.”

Ezek. 12:3 Therefore, thou son of man, prepare thee stuff for removing, and remove by day in their sight; and thou shalt remove from thy place to another place in their sight: it may be they will consider, though they *be* a rebellious house.

Ezek. 12:4 Then shalt thou bring forth thy stuff by day in their sight, as stuff for removing: and thou shalt go forth at even in their sight, as they that go forth into captivity.

Ezek. 12:5 Dig thou through the wall in their sight, and carry out thereby.

Ezek. 12:6 In their sight shalt thou bear *it* upon *thy* shoulders, and carry it forth in the twilight: thou shalt cover thy face, that thou see not the ground: for I have set thee *for* a sign unto the house of Israel.

Ezekiel is again instructed to act with the intent of presenting an object lesson, a visible demonstration of the truth being shared. Ezekiel is to pack up in full view of the people during the day and move to another place—to leave his home and relocate. The Hebrew for the word *removing* is a direct reference to going into exile/captivity. The way that he prepared would give a clear indication of the difference in moving by choice and moving into captivity. Why is Ezekiel acting out this little drama? Maybe, the Lord says, some of the people will be able to discern the intent of the message even though they are rebellious (bitter, disobedient). Ezekiel’s demonstration of leaving home is to represent the people going into captivity, and they are to accept this as God’s judgment; it will not be altered.

Ezekiel isn’t going to leave by the easiest and most direct route. He is to dig through the wall as they watch him and carry his stuff with him through the hole. This would seem to be a picture of the people of Jerusalem having to pick their way through the destroyed walls of the city. It also seems to picture the people bearing a great weight upon their shoulders as they head out into the oncoming darkness. This would seem to represent the heaviness of spirit of the captives as well as poor treatment at the hands of their captors. To head out into the darkness would picture heading into an evil, wicked place—a place out of

God's presence. In fact, Ezekiel is to cover his face so that he can't see the ground. This would seem to picture a man with no control over the direction he is headed.

This object lesson was intended as a sign or wonder for the house of Israel. Why? Because it is again God telling His people what He is doing, and when it comes to pass, they should recognize it as an affirmation of the truth of God's word. This is a double-edged truth. They should understand that just as surely as the judgment comes to pass so will the predicted restoration.

Ezek. 12:7 And I did so as I was commanded: I brought forth my stuff by day, as stuff for captivity, and in the even I digged through the wall with mine hand; I brought *it* forth in the twilight, and I bare *it* upon *my* shoulder in their sight.

We are now told that Ezekiel did exactly as he was instructed. He made preparations for going into captivity in the bright light of day, and then he dug through the wall as the sun was going down and carried his burden as he set off in the oncoming darkness. Point is made that all was done in full view of the people.

Ezek. 12:8 And in the morning came the word of the LORD unto me, saying, Ezek. 12:9 Son of man, hath not the house of Israel, the rebellious house, said unto thee, What doest thou?

Ezek. 12:10 Say thou unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; This burden concerneth the prince in Jerusalem, and all the house of Israel that *are* among them.

The next day the Lord spoke to Ezekiel again and informed Ezekiel that He knew the people had questioned him about his actions. They obviously didn't understand the object lesson. So the Lord graciously allows Ezekiel to give them an explanation.

The message is described as a burden, a message of doom. Ezekiel is to tell the people point blank that this message was a picture of what was going to happen to the prince, the ruling authority, in Jerusalem as well as the people that were left in the land. The prince being referenced is Zedekiah.

Ezek. 12:11 Say, I *am* your sign: like as I have done, so shall it be done unto them: they shall remove *and* go into captivity.

Ezek. 12:12 And the prince that *is* among them shall bear upon *his* shoulder in the twilight, and shall go forth: they shall dig through the wall to carry out thereby: he shall cover his face, that he see not the ground with *his* eyes.

Ezek. 12:13 My net also will I spread upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare: and I will bring him to Babylon *to* the land of the Chaldeans; yet shall he not see it, though he shall die there.

Ezekiel is to declare that his actions are representative of the judgment that God has declared for His people. The city of Jerusalem will be conquered and those that aren't killed will be taken into captivity. Zedekiah will try to escape into the night through the city walls. He will end up going into captivity in Babylon as a

blind man, and he will eventually die in Babylon. These events are described in more detail in Jeremiah 39.

Ezek. 12:14 And I will scatter toward every wind all that *are* about him to help him, and all his bands; and I will draw out the sword after them.

No one would be left who could come to Zedekiah's rescue. He witnessed the murder of his four sons as well as the nobles of Jerusalem before his own eyes were put out.

2 Kings 25:7 "And they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon."

Ezek. 12:15 And they shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I shall scatter them among the nations, and disperse them in the countries.

When the people recognize that the word of God declared by His prophets was true, they will once again recognize that He is YHWH. If He has to scatter His people among the nations to prove it, so be it.

Ezek. 12:16 But I will leave a few men of them from the sword, from the famine, and from the pestilence; that they may declare all their abominations among the heathen whither they come; and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

This verse gives a glimmer of hope for the future. God will allow a remnant of the nation of Israel to escape death. Those left will be those who are faithful to God and will boldly declare His truth and stand for righteousness. They will not be afraid to identify evil as evil. They will recognize God as THE ALMIGHTY. They will speak of God's righteousness in judging His people by giving them up to captivity among the heathen. They will declare this truth among the heathen to ensure that they don't misinterpret God's judgment of His people as His inability to protect them.

Ezek. 12:17 Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

Ezek. 12:18 Son of man, eat thy bread with quaking, and drink thy water with trembling and with carefulness;

Ezek. 12:19 And say unto the people of the land, Thus saith the Lord GOD of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, *and* of the land of Israel; They shall eat their bread with carefulness, and drink their water with astonishment, that her land may be desolate from all that is therein, because of the violence of all them that dwell therein.

Ezek. 12:20 And the cities that are inhabited shall be laid waste, and the land shall be desolate; and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD.

Ezekiel is now instructed to eat his food and drink his water depicting a state of fear and anxiety (from the Hebrew for *carefulness*). Ezekiel is to inform the captives that the people of Israel and Jerusalem are responsible for the destruction coming upon them. Their actions have resulted in this judgment. YHWH is going to judge them so decisively that they will have to recognize Him as LORD.

Ezek. 12:21 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

Ezek. 12:22 Son of man, what is that proverb *that ye have in the land of Israel, saying, The days are prolonged, and every vision faileth?*

The Lord now makes reference to a proverb that was well known in the land of Israel: "The days are prolonged, and every vision faileth." The NLT states the truth more clearly: "Time passes, making a liar of every prophet."

This statement reminds of a passage in 2Peter.

2Pet. 3:3 Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,

2Pet. 3:4 And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of the creation.

The people of Ezekiel's day were just as ignorant as those today with that attitude. They interpret God's longsuffering with His not caring or exercising His authority. Another verse in 2Peter gives us God's point of view.

2Pet. 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

Ezek. 12:23 Tell them therefore, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will make this proverb to cease, and they shall no more use it as a proverb in Israel; but say unto them, The days are at hand, and the effect of every vision.

Ezek. 12:24 For there shall be no more any vain vision nor flattering divination within the house of Israel.

There is a point when God's longsuffering mercy will end. For the nation of Israel in Ezekiel's day that time had come. The prophesied judgment had begun and would be completed as declared. God would no longer allow the false prophets to declare lies in His name. They were speaking the message that the people wanted to hear rather than God's truth. God was no longer going to tolerate such action.

I can't help but make connection with the church of today. Everyone is more concerned about being tolerant and preaching a "feel good" message so that people leave the church comfortable in their sin. They are hesitant to declare God's truth about sin that speaks against what is accepted in our society. The prophet Jeremiah declared this truth in the book of Lamentations:

Lam. 2:14 Thy prophets have seen vain and foolish things for thee: and they have not discovered thine iniquity: and they have not discovered thine iniquity, to turn away thy captivity; but have seen for thee false burdens and causes of banishment.

The CJB states it this way:

The visions your prophets saw for you were futile, just a whitewash.

They did not expose your guilt, so as to reverse your fortunes - no, the visions they saw for you were alluring, but futile.

And the NLT:

Lam. 2:14 ¶ Your "prophets" have said so many foolish things, false to the core. They did not try to hold you back from exile by pointing out your sins. Instead, they painted false pictures, filling you with false hope.

These “feel good” preachers rationalize their decision by the fact that more people will come to church if the message is positive. How are the unsaved multitudes ever going to recognize their need for salvation if they can discern no difference when comparing their lives with those that claim the name “Christian” and their sin is never identified as sin. I know God is greatly grieved and that the time is coming soon when His longsuffering will reach its limit regarding the “church” today.

Ezek. 12:25 For I *am* the LORD: I will speak, and the word that I shall speak shall come to pass; it shall be no more prolonged: for in your days, O rebellious house, will I say the word, and will perform it, saith the Lord GOD. This verse reiterates the truth of the previous verses. YHWH is going to declare His word and judge accordingly without delay. The people hearing the message would soon see the fulfillment of that message.

Ezek. 12:26 Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying,
Ezek. 12:27 Son of man, behold, *they* of the house of Israel say, The vision that he seeth *is* for many days *to come*, and he prophesieth of the times *that are* far off.

Ezek. 12:28 Therefore say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; There shall none of my words be prolonged any more, but the word which I have spoken shall be done, saith the Lord GOD.

Again the Lord declares that the prophecy given by Ezekiel will come to pass soon. The people need not think that the message is intended for the far future. Again, they were misinterpreting the Lord’s longsuffering.